

REMARKS

Applicant has carefully reviewed the non-final Office Action mailed April 2, 2009, and thanks Examiner Johnson for the detailed review of the pending claims. Claims 13, 15, 19, 21, 22, 24 – 27, 30, 33 – 37 and 41 are pending in the application.

Applicant would like to thank Examiner Johnson for the allowance of claims 13, 15, 19, 21, 22, 24 and 25. Applicants' representative further wishes to thank Examiner Johnson for extending the courtesy of a telephonic interview on June 18, 2009, during which the prior art of record and pending claims were discussed. During the Interview the Examiner provided guidance regarding amendments to independent claims 26 and 33 to clarify the subject matter contained therein and traverse the pending rejections.

Applicants have therefore amended independent claims 26 and 33 consistent with the understanding provided by the Examiner, and thus respectfully traverse the pending rejections as described further below. Support for the amendments can be found throughout the specification and drawings as originally filed, as further described below. Accordingly, claims 13, 15, 19, 21, 22, 24 – 27, 30, 33 – 37 and 41 remain pending.

At least for the reasons set forth below, Applicant believes the pending claims are allowable over the references of record. Further, Applicant believes that there are also reasons other than those set forth below why the pending claims are patentable, and reserves the right to set forth those reasons, and to argue for the patentability of claims not explicitly addressed herein, in future papers.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C §102

The Office Action rejected claims 26, 27, 30, 33 – 37, and 41 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being allegedly anticipated by Obata et al. U.S. Patent No. 5,816,108 (hereinafter Obata). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

A. Independent Claims

Independent claims 26 and 33 have been amended, and now recite, in part:

an axially displaceable bellows positioned along the axial path around a portion of the at least one line, the bellows is connected directly to the line and the mounting plate... (Emphasis added)

Independent claim 33 has been similarly amended, and now recites, in part:

at least one robot line positioned along the axial path;
a bellows positioned along the axial path connected directly to the line and the robot arm allowing extension or compression of the line along the axial path... (Emphasis added)

Support for the amendments to claims 26, and 33 can be found throughout the specification and drawings as originally filed, at least at paragraphs [0008] thru [0012] and [0029] of the specification, and FIGS. 2A, 2B, 3B and 4 of the drawings. Obata fails to teach or suggest such an arrangement.

More specifically, Obata discloses an assembled wrist for industrial robot that includes a cylindrical member 50 covering a cylindrical passageway 45. *See Obata, Col. 4, lines 40 thru 45.* The Office Action points to “corrugations 62” as the claimed “bellows” at each end 50A, 50B that are formed by folding the outer surface 50a and the inner surface 50b radially and successively. *See Office Action Page 2 line 20 thru 21 and See Obata, Col. 5, lines 18 thru 24.* However, the cylindrical member 50 is hermitically fixed to the inner surface of a tool support portion 5 creating a conduit. *See Obata, Col. 5, lines 2 thru 17.* Therefore, the hermitically fixed cylindrical member is not “connected directly to the line and the mounting plate,” or “a bellows positioned along the axial path connected directly to the line and the robot arm,” as recited by independent claims 26 and 33, respectively. Applicants thus respectfully submit that independent claims 26 and 33 are allowable over the references of record.

B. Dependent Claims

Dependent claims 27, 30, 34-37, and 41 each depend from one of independent claims 26 or 33, and are therefore allowable over the references of record for at least the same reasons

described above. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the present rejections are therefore respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue.

Applicant believes no fee is due with this response. However, if a fee is due, please charge our Deposit Account No. 18-0013, under Order No. 66835-0003 from which the undersigned is authorized to draw.

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Respectfully submitted,

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